

THE POLYNESIAN.

HONOLULU, SATURDAY, MARCH 31.

IF we are not under a misapprehension, there is a feeling among the foreigners scattered over this group and participated in by those resident in Honolulu, that something might or ought to be done to render the execution of the duties devolving by law upon the several Governors of islands more expeditious, business-like and sure. And certainly those high officers have it so much in their power to facilitate the operations of individuals and to encourage the general improvement of the country, that the public may well look at them and their acts with no common interest. In the index to the 2d Kamehameha III. the list of transactions to be performed by the Governors occupies four pages, so those who have not a law-book by them will easily understand they must be rather numerous. Many and perhaps most of them are of a foreign form and complexion, difficult in the eyes of those who have hitherto been unfamiliar with the way in which similar designs and details are carried out elsewhere, and fifty times more so to our Governors in consequence of the people generally being not only unacquainted with, but uninterested in them. For now that the burden and toil and oppression and hunger and fear attendant upon the system have been removed, the natives talk approvingly of the *ancient regime*, because it called for a very slight exercise of individual responsibility on the part of the serfs and required but little precision and attendance to formalities. They forget that precision and form take place among the guarantees which they possess for a non-recurrence of the inflections first mentioned.

Now to say that the Governors are not at present what they might be, is to advance nothing to their disparagement, unless they hold with the doctrine of innate ideas and come on every subject. We doubt if any one ever came into the world with his own original impressions on the propriety of citing before him parties affected by the construction of roads, highways and bridges, or receiving written instructions respecting discretionary duties, or diminishing the local perquisites of the health officer under his contract, or his power to affix the approximate amount, number and value of animals or household property for taxation purposes. And therefore according to our idea of things it would not be derogatory to the Governors but quite the reverse, if some temporary steps were taken to assist them in the discharge of their really arduous duties, for the result would be to make them more efficient and their office more respected.

At the same time the matter is hampered with one or two considerations of a delicate nature. It is possible some persons may think that the native chiefs while they acknowledged, as they invariably do, their obligations to the foreigners who take part with them in the administration of affairs, might possibly feel a little chagrined to think that even their Governors were not yet quite up to the mark. This however, could not at most amount to more than a first impression, for a moment's reflection would show them the thing in its true colors. Another consideration is perhaps of more weight, though even it is light enough. The foreigners who hold office under the Government are often called (by foreigners like themselves, no matter for what purpose) encroachers, usurpers and other kindred terms. They are represented as birds of prey bent on feathering their own nests. Heaven only knows whether those who sing this song are not a sort of political cuckoo, appearing only when the winter is past and every thing looks sunny and pleasant, and less anxious as ornithologists say, to feather their own, than to step into nests already feathered by others. It is not long since the King was recommended to set the whole brood flying, and retrograde of course to the good old times of — but perhaps you have heard about the good old times. Under these circumstances then it may be felt by some to be rather a delicate business to recommend the organization of new offices to be filled by foreigners, lest they should be misrepresented as so many new links in the chain forged by the white advisers.

The foreigners, however, want law, they want regularity, they want dispatch in public business. Without these they say they cannot succeed as individuals nor can the country prosper. The natives on the other hand, weary of the small oppressions of their petty officers, and pray for a time when the latter will be more closely watched. In the meanwhile the Governors are trying to understand the law. Kneedeep in forms which their fathers knew not, they lack time to attend to their various duties. The book is before them, but were they asked as to whether they understood it, we think they would be inclined to answer as he did who was of great authority under Queen Candace: How can we, except some one should guide us? and like him desire those willing to assist, to come up and sit with them.

This much is certain that lands are being disposed of to foreigners and the country will soon be dotted with homesteads. If then you confer rights upon these foreigners, you must see that nothing hinders or clogs the exercise of those rights. If you are convinced that the prosperity of the islands demands the introduction of a limited number of foreigners and wish their houses, their plantations and their industry to be looked upon by the natives as examples for themselves, you must facilitate their operations. And you can not do this more effectually, through any single measure than by furnishing each governor with a foreign assistant, call him what you may. No matter though it should find no favor in the eyes of one or two who are used to speak for themselves and countrymen, yet differ at least, on this point—it is enough for you to seek their countrymen's solid good in common with that of our compatriots.

FOR CALIFORNIA.—The fever to be off for the "gold diggings" begins to run somewhat high, but it has not yet reached the \$150 "chalk mark," a sure sign that reason still holds the sway and has not been dethroned. The fever touches the \$100 mark, without appearing to affect the patients, but when it gets over that, cold water on the head night and morning is recommended.

The large collection of Books now offered for sale at this office, will be packed up the fore part of next week, for California.

Items of News.

William A. Hall, of Missouri, has been appointed by the President of the U. S., Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the U. S., for the Territory of Oregon, in place of the Honorable James Taney, who declined the office.

Kintzing Pritchett of Penn., to be Secretary for the Territory of Oregon.

Wm. P. Bryant of Ia., to be Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States for the Territory of Oregon.

Peter H. Burnett of Oregon, to be an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States for the Territory of Oregon.

Isaac W. R. Bromley of N. Y. to be Attorney of the United States for the District of Oregon.

Joseph L. Meek of Oregon, to be Marshal of the United States for the District of Oregon.

John Adair of Ky., to be Collector of the Port for the District of Oregon, in the Territory of Oregon.

Francis H. Merriman, Attorney of the United States for the District of Texas, in the place of G. W. Brown, deceased.

Gen. Taylor has been elected an honorary member of the "Newton Literary Institute," of Baltimore.

The U. S. frigate St. Lawrence, Capt. Paulding, is under sailing orders. She will go first to Bremen, thence to the Baltic, if the season will permit, and finally to the Mediterranean, where she will remain as the flag ship.

The Rev. Joseph Porter and two sons, of the Lodianna Mission, Northern India, under the care of the Presbyterian Board, arrived at Philadelphia on the 22d Sept., in the ship Wyoming, from Liverpool.

Amongst the persons who perished in the Ocean Monarch, were Mr. Beacon, master of the workhouse of St. Luke's, London, and Mrs. Walter, the parish school-mistress, both married persons, who had eloped together, both leaving large families behind them.

The President has recognized Edmund A. Grattan as consul for Britannic Majesty for the state of Massachusetts, to reside at Boston.

Rev. Daniel Poor, D. D., and his wife, missionaries of the American Board in Ceylon, arrived in New York on the 25th Sept.

A new freight depot is now in progress of erection at East Albany, N. Y., for the Albany and Boston railroad company, 750 feet in length by 133 feet in width. It is supposed that 1,300,000 bricks will be required in its construction, and the cost will be \$100,000.

The President has officially recognized E. S. Benson of Boston, as vice consul of Sweden and Norway, for Maine, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire.

The first of the new decimal coins has just been completed in England. It is a two-shilling piece, bearing the profile of the Queen on the obverse.

All widows of revolutionary soldiers married previous to 1800, are hereafter to draw pensions. A new history of England, from the time of James II., by Thomas Babington Macaulay, is in the press.

The London Literary Gazette says that Dr. Simpson, of Glasgow, has discovered that gutta serena, dissolved in chloroform, is an excellent styptic for dressing cuts and wounds. This discovery was made some six months since, by a highly respectable physician in this vicinity, and was communicated to the public through the medium of our paper.

George Folliot Hopkins, Esq., formerly of New York, died recently at Rahway, N. J., aged 79 years. He was a practical printer, a publisher, and at one time a man of large property. He was a partner of Dr. N. Webster in the publication of the Commercial Advertiser, and was greatly esteemed.

The Scotch Reformers' Gazette traces the phrase "true blue" to the Covenanters, who assumed the color in obedience to the following precept, in the law of Moses:—"Speak to the children of Israel, and tell them to make to themselves fringes on the borders of their garments, putting in them 'ribbons of blue.'"

Mr. Corcoran, who proceeded to England for the purpose of effecting a sale of U. S. Government stocks, writes that he has no doubt of selling \$5,000,000 of the Government loans to the Baring, and Overend, Gurney & Co.

Pens made of bones are now in use in England, and sell at the rate of fifty for twenty-two cents. They are pronounced to be as flexible as the quill, and far more durable.

Upon the Mississippi river and its tributary streams, are now about five hundred steamboats, with capacity to carry at one trip near two hundred thousand tons. Assuming that these boats will make an average of thirty-six trips in the year, they would transport seven millions two hundred thousand tons.

Rev. Mr. Prentiss, of New Bedford, has been elected to the professorship of Natural and Revealed Religion in Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Me.

Judge Conrad, of Philadelphia, has won the prize of \$1000 offered by Forrest for the best original tragedy.

At Munich and several other places in Germany, a mark is placed on the hat of any gentleman who subscribes a certain sum for the benefit of the poor, or the establishment of a German fleet. He is then considered to be exempted from taking off his hat as a mark of respect and politeness, and need only touch its brim with his finger.

Capt. Prentiss, of the 1st U. S. Artillery, died of yellow fever, at New Orleans on the 22nd Sept.

The N. Y. Tribune states that a letter has been received from Mr. Bancroft, U. S. Minister in England, giving strong reasons to hope that before long a satisfactory international Postage law will be established with Great Britain.

The Missionary Herald for Sept. says, the receipts of the American Board for Foreign Missions, for the financial year ending 31st July last, from all sources, amounted to \$254,056. The expenditures during the same period were \$282,380; and the debt, on the 1st Aug., 1847, was \$81,616. Hence the balance against the treasury on the 1st of Aug., 1848, was \$9,890.

Thomas Flynn, a well known comic actor, died Sept. 6, in the New York Hospital.

A Lieut. in the British Navy has invented a "Peril Indicator," to show when steamers or other ships are running into shoal water. The apparatus consists of two bars, which project ten feet below the keel of the vessel; and as soon as these bars touch the ground, they spring up on a level with the keel and ring a bell, which warns the engineer that he must reverse the engine and drive the ship astern.

Mr. Struve has exhibited in England, a model of a low pressure atmospheric Railway, in which the propulsive power is to be gained by compressing instead of by exhausting the air. By employing a large area of tube and a low pressure, it is expected by Mr. Struve that the practical difficulties which attend the ordinary atmospheric railway may be avoided. The cost of this kind of atmospheric railway apparatus is estimated at about £7000 per mile.

The Bradford (Eng.) Observer, contains an advertisement, headed "Matrimony," from which we make the following extract:—"Two gentlemen, about to emigrate to South Australia, are desirous of meeting with partners in their future life. They are members of the established church, and they would not wish the ladies' ages to exceed twenty-five years. A few hundred pounds are decidedly requisite."

A man in New Orleans was invited by a drinking companion, a stranger, to join in robbing a store; to which he pretended to assent, and found it to be his own! He agreed to the plan, watched for the thief, and nabbed him.

Thousands of wise men and women at St. Louis witnessed the feat of a man in that city who climbed up a Liberty Pole 320 feet high and set the American flag on top. The cause of the vast concourse of spectators was a report that he would haul the pole up after him!

The New Orleans Delta says several cases of hydrophobia have been cured in that city by chloroform.

A correspondent of the Eastport Sentinel, (Me.) says that a company of gentlemen from Boston are at work with an apparatus invented by a gentleman who belongs to Boston. The operator has to descend to the depth of one hundred and twenty feet from the surface, where he is enabled to remain one hour, or longer, as the occasion may require—and freely converse, through a tube, to the distance of two hundred feet.

The Prince de Joinville, who has his father's sagacity in money matters, without his over-grasping avarice, is investing his means in U. S. stock. For one item he has lately bought \$20,000 of New York stock, in his own and wife's name. So says the New York Sun.

The New Orleans Bulletin asserts, on very good authority, that "there does not exist in the whole of Mexico, at this time, a single unpaid debt contracted by any one of the officers of the U. S. regular army." This is most honorable.

The Rev. Dr. Junkin, of Pennsylvania, has accepted the Presidency of Washington College, Lexington, Va.

M. Bonafant of Paris a military surgeon, gave an account before the British Academy of Sciences, at a recent session, of a method used by him in cases of deafness, to discover whether the nerve of sound has lost all its susceptibility. He has ascertained that the skull is a good conductor of vibration, and that if it be struck by vibrating objects, the nerve of the ear is acted upon whenever its susceptibility has not been entirely destroyed.

Mrs. Jencks, wife of Rev. E. N. Jencks, Missionary from Siam, died on board the ship Valparaiso on her passage from Canton to New York city on the 27th of June, in lat. 32 S. long. 14 E.

Rev. Wm. Ireland and wife, sailed from Boston on the 14th Oct., as Missionaries of the American Board to the Zulus of South Africa.

It is stated that the Rev. Dr. Stone of Brooklyn, New York has recently inherited, through his son by a former wife, by the death of an English gentleman named Morrison, an estate of \$400,000.

During the last eighteen years, the streets of London have increased 200 miles in length, nearly a mile a month.

J. K. Evans, a well known merchant of Philadelphia, while entering his name at the city hotel, in New York, Sept. 7th, fell dead. His death was caused by apoplexy.

A NEW MISSION COMPANY, including eleven Congregationalists or Presbyterians, and eight Baptists, sailed Oct. 10, from Boston for different stations in Southern India. The number of foreign Missionary laborers now under the care of the American Board, is about 570, and under the care of the Northern Baptist Union, about 270, requiring for carrying out their plans of Christian Philanthropy annual contributions from the churches of about \$400,000.

The Mobile Tribune states that a cotton factory, with a capital of \$50,000, is about to be erected in that city. The necessary amount, within a thousand dollars, has been subscribed.

The Boston Atlas of Oct. 16th announces the decease of Jeremiah Mason and William Lawrence, two of the oldest and most venerated citizens of the city of Boston.

The Superior Court of the United States, in a case which was carried to that tribunal from one of the courts of South Carolina, decided that U. S. Stocks are not taxable by States, and United States Treasury Notes came within the scope of that decision. Chief Justice Marshall delivered the opinion of the court.

The Lexington (Ky.) Atlas brings us the death, on the 5th Aug. of Gen. James Shelby, son of the late Gov. Isaac Shelby. Gen. S. was aged about 65 years, and was one of the most wealthy and respectable citizens of Fayette county.

The Common Council of the city of New York has voted to confer the freedom of the city, in a gold box, upon Frederick Jerome, the heroic seaman, through whose instrumentality numbers of lives were saved from the burning Ocean Monarch.

The U. S. frigate Brandywine, Commodore Storer, arrived at Rio Janeiro, Aug. 19, from Pernambuco.

We learn from the New York Tribune, that Mr. J. S. Bergen, the American "sympathiser," now in prison in Belfast, Ireland, has written home, that he will probably soon be released.

GEN. ZACHARY TAYLOR.

Our latest dates from the United States, renders it certain that Gen. Taylor has been elected President. It may not be uninteresting to our readers to peruse an account of the services and character of one who has thus been raised to the highest office in the gift of the American people. The following article is from the National Intelligencer, the leading Whig paper at Washington, and although it may be termed political in its character, and was written during the Presidential contest, still our readers can make all due allowances for this, and at the same time form a good idea of his intellectual worth and ability:—

It is not to be denied that, but for the splendor of General Taylor's military achievements in the Mexican war, his name would probably never have been brought forward in connection with the office of President. But for the events of that war, the knowledge of his rare and modest merit might have been confined, as during his prior unobtrusive career of public service, almost exclusively to those who have been associated with him in the ordinary routine of military duty. The public attention was, it must be admitted, for the first time, generally attracted to him by the eclat of the great battles fought under his command near the Rio Grande. He may be said indeed to have then almost literally first discovered himself to his countrymen in a blaze of glory, of such glory as the multitude has the most lively appreciation of, but upon which humane and intelligent men, aloof from the multitude, also know how to place a proper value, when it is accompanied as in the case of those battles, by service the most important to the country, and by personal characteristics solidly good, sober, high. The news of the first successes on the Rio Grande, all brilliant as those successes were, made the deeper and more universal impression on the public mind, from their succeeding a painful apprehension, which has been some days hanging over it, of the army's "being hemmed in by a superior Mexican force, cut off from its supplies, and perhaps compelled to retreat, if not to capitulate. The echo to that news, resounding from the mountains and valleys of the West, gave back to the Gulf of Mexico the name of Zachary Taylor, accompanied by a spontaneous outburst in his favor as a candidate for the Presidency.

The popular passion for military glory had, therefore, much to do with the bringing of Gen. Taylor into the presence of the people, as it had, and is doing, their attention towards him as one worthy of being clothed with the highest honor in their gift. In a word, had he not fought those great battles, we are ready to allow that he would not have been, as he now is, the candidate of the Whigs, as well as of some not belonging to that party, for the office of President of the United States. His military exploits brought him prominently into public notice. The fame of them will doubtless have secured to him no small proportion of the votes which he will receive at the approaching election. But it is to other considerations, appreciated by civil as well as by military men, that to a knowledge of the personal qualities, the soundness of judgment and rectitude of purpose, adaptations to the highest civil employment, which his late conspicuous position has enabled the people of every part of the country to recognize in him, that he will be indebted for his elevation to the highest seat of human ambition, the Presidency of the United States.

Though we have never, that we know of, met Gen. Taylor face to face, he is yet a very old acquaintance of ours. It is just six and thirty years ago, at the moment when the heart of the country was depressed by Hull's surrender of his army at Detroit, that news was received in this city of the successful defence of Fort Harrison by General (then Captain) Zachary Taylor, against a vastly superior force of Indians, under circumstances which rendered resistance almost hopeless, but which the young but indomitable courage and energy of our Captain enabled him to overcome. The effect of this news was such as can hardly be realized at the present day, when the imagination has become familiar with war on a grander scale; but it turned the whole current of public feeling at once, and inspired new confidence in the ability of our arms to maintain the defence of the then feeble and sparsely populated frontier. For this gallant exploit Mr. Madison conferred on this gallant Taylor the Brevet of Major, the first brevet conferred in the war of 1812, and now the oldest in the army.

From that day the name of Taylor has ever held a secure place in our memory, though it had not, until the time of his late service, the "Army of Observation," often met our view. We knew, however, that during the whole time he was almost always upon hard duty, and performed it well; especially in the harassing Black Hawk war, and in the Florida war; in which last he distinguished himself no less by his gallantry and by his success in battle, than by a personal department which acquired for him the attachment of all who served with him.

Passing over the intermediate part of his military career, we must hasten to the period when his orders from the war department placed him in command in a wider field, and charged him with duties the execution of which brought him at once in full view before us. We refer, of course, to the time of his assuming the command of the forces gathered together ostensibly to protect the frontier of Texas, but destined afterwards to a more active and dangerous service.

Let us pay our first respects to him in his command at Corpus Christi, some weeks after it was established, on a sandy beach, of three miles in length, without a tree or a shrub to ward off the noon-day rays of an almost vertical sun. On approaching the head-quarters of the General, consisting of a single wall tent, one is struck with the simple and severe soldier-like aspect of all its surroundings. On visiting the General, we are met by a frank hearty welcome from one whose simplicity of attire would not have designated him, in the group from which he issues, as the Commander of the gallant little army. This, however, is General Taylor. The first interview with him convinces you that he is a kind-hearted gentleman, "all of the olden time;" an impression which every day's further intercourse would have confirmed, with the additional conviction of his frankness and decision of character.

As the season advanced and the temperature of the night air became cooler, a large "camp fire" would blaze forth every evening in front of the General's tent, and here might always be found assembled officers from the highest to the lowest in grade, sometimes in larger and sometimes in smaller bodies, seated as best they could, listening to and contributing the recitals which such gatherings would naturally call forth. All would be welcome, and received with unaffected good nature. This promiscuous and free intercourse would strike you most favorably; for, whilst every man was expected to do his duty, no one seemed so anxious in the hours of relaxation to promote the comfort and happiness of all as the Commanding General. How will he succeed in the entire campaign, no one of "the Old Guard" was ever heard to speak of the General otherwise than in terms of friendship. To the sick he was uniformly kind and attentive; and no officer had the misfortune to appear on the sick list without receiving a visit from the General. The taking possession of Corpus Christi was the first act in the drama of this war; and this first movement having been lost sight of in the more stirring events, the credit due to that undertaking has not, we think, been duly awarded.

The army, never exceeding four thousand strong, was hastily gathered together from the four quarters of the country, and in small detachments, with the exception of the "Army of Observation," which had been posted near the Sabine. The troops composing the latter army, arriving at St. Joseph's, (a desolate island on the coast of Texas)—the unexplored Aransas bay intervening between it and Corpus Christi—it was no easy matter to move onward; for, in the haste and hurry of the movement, the want of proper boats and other facilities, and the absolute want of knowledge of the country, the extreme heat of the climate, and, worst of all, a multitude of obstacles came in thick array, to prove that the operation was no holiday pastime.

Decision, indeed, and energy and courage of no ordinary kind, were called into requisition. Companies and detachments were pushed onward as best they could be—the landing at Corpus Christi effected without loss—and the nucleus of that army forced, which without other aid, fought and gloriously won the battles of the 8th and 9th of the following May, the first, and, in their influence, the most important fought in Mexico.

It was the energy of Gen. Taylor that achieved this first step. At Corpus Christi the first object was to organize a train for the transportation of the supplies of the army. This object, under that most able Quartermaster General, the late Col. Cross, was accomplished with all dispatch. Mules and oxen had to be found, purchased, and broken to harness, and the wagons to be procured in the United States. To the former part of this business General Taylor gave his constant attention, and he might be seen every morning, after an early breakfast, riding to the Quartermaster's depot to inspect the cattle offered for sale. Every economy was exercised; and probably no Quartermaster General ever had a closer eye than the Commander of the Army to the government purse-strings. Critically exact and economical in his private affairs, the General was no less so with those of the government.

When orders reached Corpus Christi for the movement on the Rio Grande, little delay was suffered before the army was under way. The long train moved up to their respective columns as day after day the army was put in motion, in the most perfect and serviceable order. It was an interesting spectacle, that first movement of the army, after a domiciliation on the plains of Corpus Christi of some seven months. The last train struck on that occasion was that of the Commanding General, he having to the last, assured himself that all was right, and then by forced marches reached, on the second night after their departure, the advanced column, and led it.

The principal army stores of the Ordnance, Quartermaster, and Commissariat were transported by sea to Point Isabel; and so judicious was the combined movement, that the flotilla and army arrived, as it were, at the same moment; and the next morning, at daybreak, the latter, with renewed supplies, was enabled to move on the Rio Grande, and all things arranged for the establishment and defence of a grand depot at Point Isabel. So well timed were all of the arrangements, that not a moment was lost in carrying out the orders of the government. It was a perfect co-operation by sea and by land.

We now approach the actual scenes of war. Much as has been said of the battles won by Gen. Taylor in Mexico, the particular objects and consequences of those battles, the judgment and the foresight which dictated, and the decision which executed them, have been scarcely noticed at all. The glory of the achievements of the army under the General's command is all that seems to have been much cared for; though, when the actual achievements come to be compared with the obstacles overcome, the reward secured off by them, it will be seen that the objects accomplished by these victories were as substantial as the battles themselves were brilliant.

In reference to the position in which General Taylor is now placed, almost against wall, as a candidate before the people for the Chief Magistracy, the soundness of judgment which he displayed, on all occasions, during his campaign in Mexico, is of more interest to the country than his gallantry in the field, a quality more or less paraded by him by all the officers, and nearly all the privates, Volunteers as well as Regulars, under his command.

The object of Gen. Taylor's march from Fort Brown (in front of Matamoros) to Point Isabel, in the opening of the war, was to procure provision for his forces. His determination to march back to Fort Brown (the enemy under Arista having passed the Rio Grande and placed himself between the two parts of our army) was to save the garrison of that fort. With this resolution, he wrote to the War Department, under date of the 7th of May, that he was about to set out on his return to Fort Brown, and that, if the Mexicans opposed his march, in whatever force, he should fight them. On that march, the following day, he did meet them at Palo Alto, and beat them. All knew that the contest would not end there, and that another conflict must take place before the object of the march was effected. Doubts were entertained by many of the officers in Gen. Taylor's army about the ability of so small a force to advance safely against so large a one of the enemy. The object of the march, the situation of the garrison of Fort Brown, outweighed in the General's mind every consideration of danger. The advance was determined upon, the battle of Resaca fought and won, the garrison of Fort Brown rescued, and the administration saved from disgrace. For it is much to be doubted whether, had Gen. Taylor failed on the Rio Grande—had his army been destroyed or compelled to capitulate—whether an army of sufficient force could have been easily raised in the United States to face the Mexicans, flushed with victory, with Santa Anna at their head, and never failing resources and energy at their heels, as it could be, after Taylor's glorious victories, when the whole country was inspired by them, and all that our volunteers had to do was to go to Mexico and take a share in them. But for these early successes, the result of Taylor's right judgment and resolute will, the Mexican war might have been a series of disasters, instead of the unbroken succession of victories that it was.

After these battles, and re-establishing his camp opposite Matamoros, Gen. Taylor, with a small escort, returned to Point Isabel, and Com. Conner and that portion of his squadron that had on land co-operated with the detachment left for the defence of Point Isabel; and it was on this occasion that was manifested the first evidence of that enthusiastic feeling towards the General which afterwards filled so many breasts.

A point of etiquette arose as to the propriety of receiving the General with any demonstrations of joy. But this was no time for etiquette. His approach had been heralded, and already the parapets were lined with Jack-tars, eager for the first glimpse of the old Hero; and, as he "came in sight," or rather became tangible, for it was too dark to see, the spontaneous and heartfelt cheers of the "combined forces," as one voice, proclaimed that he was "first in the hearts" of those who greeted him.

The General was really overcome by this unexpected demonstration; and, as he sat in the rude Mexican hut to which he had been conducted, surrounded by all who could squeeze their way to his presence, never was seen a more truthful personification of modesty, rather than elated at his own great deeds. The sailors surrounded his quarters, and it is doubtful whether there was one of those five hundred brave fellows who did not shake him by the hand. His stay on this visit was short; but he improved the occasion to visit and cheer up the wounded, and to direct all that could be done to make them comfortable.

The General returned to Matamoros as quietly and as unostentatiously as he came, leaving there that he received the reputation from Louisiana to congratulate him upon the battles he had won. But no congratulations seemed in the

slightest degree to excite his vanity. He came from the first to the last, the same Gen. Taylor. After the victories of Palo Alto, Resaca, the Administration, elated by military exploits, determined to penetrate into the interior of Mexico by taking Monterrey, calculating perhaps the only way to bring about a Peace, such terms as they should dictate.

After the capture of that city, however, the cause for peace, a stroke at the capital, and the design being carried out, it would have been a line of operations, from the mouth of the Rio Grande to Camargo, thence to San Louis Potosi, and on to the city of Mexico, not less than ten or fifteen thousand men to keep it open, and would have cost us ten times as many men as it ultimately did to effect the same operation through Vera Cruz, whilst it would have given us credit, at the same time, for the stupendous military blunder. The fact was not that our Military Cabinet were midway in their career, and, after having consulted the able General at the head of the army—Major Gen. Scott—as to further proceedings in the war, and then adopted the plan of approaching the capital through Vera Cruz.

With the details of the battle of Buena Vista every reader is too familiar, to leave us to guess at the result of the day. No one is ignorant under what odds and disadvantages it was fought, and how a host of twenty thousand men were beaten in a fair fight by an army of less than fifteen thousand, four-fifths of that number being volunteers.

The result of that unequal engagement, which electrified the whole nation, surprised our government, and astonished even European statesmen and her generals of a hundred years ago, was due yet more to the confidence which the army had in its commander, founded upon knowledge of his character, than to the skill in his dispositions and the nature of the resources. Instead of narrating the details of that memorable conflict, let us, in order to give some idea of its transcendent importance, pause for a moment to the circumstances in which Gen. Taylor was placed, and under which the battle was fought.

When, under the advice of the General, chief of the Army, the plans of the administration were changed, the attempt to reach the city of Mexico by the inland route abandoned, the route by Vera Cruz determined upon, and regular troops, who were necessary to strengthen Scott's, the whole country saw at once the position which the former was placed. No one saw more clearly than himself. "While every man of my regular force and half volunteers (now in respectable discipline) withdrawn for distant service," said he in an official letter, of January 15, 1847, to the Commander-in-Chief, "it seems that I am expected to be successful in the face of the enemy, with less than a thousand regulars and a volunteer force, mostly of new levies, to hold a defensive line, while a large army of more than twenty thousand men is in my front." "I feel that I have lost the confidence of the government, or it would not have suffered me to remain, up to this time, ignorant of its intentions, with so vitally affected interests committed to my charge. But (he added) however much I feel mortified and outraged by the course pursued, unprecedented, at least in our own history, I will carry out in good faith, and I remain, Mexico, the views of the government, though they may be sacrificed to the necessities of the war, and the necessity of repelling in manly and ample fidelity to trust reposed in me, and to be found in the records of our race, and this declaration, followed up as it was, by such sternness of decision and vigor of action, proved its writer's sincerity.

The responsibilities, difficulties and dangers by which Gen. Taylor was now beset, may well conceived, when we bear in mind that the moment when the General found himself with a body of troops, nearly all raw, seemed sufficient to keep up his communication with the depot of supplies at Camargo, he knew that large supply of the Rio Grande and the Brazos, must be drawn out by Gen. Scott, and that those supplies depended on the arm of his (Gen. S's) command, and his advance from Vera Cruz. In the midst of all the anxiety naturally attending his position, he found that Santa Anna was advancing upon his line of communication with Camargo and Brown, so that, if he availed himself of the discretion to him by instructions from his government to confine himself to Monterrey, he would be cut off from his supplies at these points; that he would fall into the hands of the enemy, depriving Gen. Scott of the portion of them that he required; and that, if he could do nothing, he himself would be forced, for want of supplies, at last to surrender. He then had to choose between two alternatives, either of which would have been sufficiently appalling to men; he must advance with a body of troops, which four-fifths were volunteers who had long been embodied, to oppose five times the number of the best Mexican troops under Santa Anna; or he must retreat to Monterrey. He knew that, if the first course was taken, and he was successful, he would preserve his line of communication with the Rio Grande, and save his army from inevitable disaster; and that, if he retreated, the only difference between his position then, and that in which he would have found himself after a retreat to Monterrey, would be that in the one case he was defeated in battle whilst in the other he was starved into a surrender. That Gen. Taylor perfectly understood and appreciated the peril of his position, and the vastness of the results dependent on his choice, which he might make between these two alternatives, there exists documentary proof. But he made his choice. He advanced to the coming blow. He fought and won the battle of Buena Vista.

With what solemnity of feeling, might with his high sense of imperative duty, he engaged in that conflict, evidence is afforded by letters written by himself to relatives and friends on the evening before the battle came off. In those letters, the substance of which has been already stated, he stated the reasons that had deterred him from giving battle to the enemy. "The only alternative," he said, "was to retreat to the Rio Grande. That would be to surrender to the enemy, and to lose all the advantage we had gained, our country injured, and her honor tarnished. Such a belief, would be the disastrous and humiliating consequences of a retreat. He therefore resolved to maintain his position at all hazards, with a determination to the rather than to lose the flag of his country to be degraded with under his care.

In order to make a successful defence with force such as his, it would be necessary that he should be exposed throughout the engagement to the most imminent peril. The chances (he said) were as to ten to one that he should lose a living man at the setting of the sun on the following day!

In another letter, on the eve of that battle, he expressed himself in even more remarkable terms:—"This may," said he, "be the last communication you will receive from me. I have been stripped by the government of regular troops, and reduced in volunteers, and am now exposed to the mercy of the foe. I have been stripped by my country to retreat, or to fight. But I can do neither. I care not for myself, but I care deeply for the noble soldiers who are about to